

**Claims**

1 1. Method for controlling network devices via a MMI, **characterized by** the  
steps of:  
generating and at least partially displaying a hierarchical view of icons of all  
devices (23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) connected to the network and/or services  
5 (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) corresponding to  
the devices, and  
coupling each of said icons with operating functions of the associated device  
(23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45,  
46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h), respectively, wherein said devices and/or services  
10 are operatable from said hierarchical view.

2. Method according to claim 1, **characterized by** recognizing a  
sub-network (21; 1-6) being integrated in said network via a bridge (128-131)  
and integrating said sub-network (21; 1-6) as an icon in said hierarchical view  
15 of icons similar to said devices and/or services, wherein said icon assigned to  
said sub-network (21; 1-6) has a higher order than icons assigned to devices  
(23-35) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g) of said sub-network.

3. Method according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-  
20 35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-  
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operatable by drag and drop operations or by cut/copy  
and paste operations.

4. Method according to claims 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-  
25 35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-  
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operatable via context sensitive menus (46; 75, 76)  
shown in said hierarchical view after selecting the icon associated with said  
device and/or service.

30 5. Method according to claim 3 or 4, **characterized in that** after operation  
at least one control signal and/or at least one data stream is sent from one de-  
vice (101; 106; 108) to at least one other device (115; 102; 105).

6. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in**  
**that** said hierarchical view of icons is organized according to predetermined

Sony International (Europe) GmbH

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1 user-selectable rules.

7. Method according to claim 6, **characterized in that** said hierarchical view of icons is organized depending on the kind of said devices (23-35; 101-5 127) and/or sub-networks (21; 1-6) connected to the network.

8. Method according to claim 6 or 7, **characterized in that** said hierarchical view of icons is organized depending on the kind of services (47-10 74, 75a-75h) being available in correspondence with said devices (23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127).

9. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the AV/C protocol is used for controlling the devices (23-35; 76d-76j; 102-110, 114, 116-119, 121-126) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 15 44, 45).

10. MMI for controlling network devices, **characterized in that** it is adapted to perform the method as defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9.

20 11. Computer program product comprising computer program means adapted to execute all steps defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9, when said computer program product is executed on a computer (101).

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